



Gauley River NRA News

Dear Park Neighbors, Visitors, and Other Interested Parties:

In 1996 the National Park Service prepared the General Management Plan (GMP) for the Gauley River National Recreation Area. Since its adoption, the GMP has provided the basis for managing the Gauley River National Recreation Area, identifying the opportunities for visitors that will be available, guiding land acquisition and development of new facilities, and setting the course for protecting and managing the Recreation Area's natural and cultural resources. It has helped the National Park Service set priorities, to make the most efficient choices for its limited resources, and to balance effectively the Recreation Area's many uses and interests.

This summer the National Park Service is taking a major step in the process of implementing the GMP. Over the next year we will prepare a Development Concept Plan (DCP) and an accompanying Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Gauley River National Recreation Area. The DCP/EA will focus upon locating and developing conceptual plans for the facilities needed to

provide the visitor experiences and resource management identified in the GMP.

Public involvement in the planning process is essential to preparing a successful DCP/EA. The National Park Service will be holding the first of three public meetings on September 23rd. At that time we will provide an opportunity for you to hear how the DCP/EA will be prepared and to give us comments regarding the continued implementation of the 1996 GMP's recommendations. For your review prior to the meeting, we have provided a summary of the 1996 GMP recommendations on the following two pages of this newsletter.

We hope to see you on September 23rd!

Sincerely,

Calvin F. Hite, Superintendent
Gauley River National Recreation Area
Bluestone National Scenic River
New River Gorge National River



Sweets Falls on the Gauley River.

Overview of the Gauley River National Recreation Area

The Gauley River National Recreation Area was established by Congress in 1988. It encompasses a 25-mile section of the Gauley River and a 5.5-mile section of the Meadow River in Nicholas and Fayette Counties, West Virginia. The 11,000-acre recreation area is mostly wooded except for gas well pads and corridors, development by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Gauley River Power Partners at Summersville Dam, private roads, and private river access sites. Panther Mountain Road (Route 22) is the only major public road within the boundary. Currently NPS owns about 4,100 of the 11,000 acres within the authorized Recreation Area boundaries.

Purpose of the Gauley River National Recreation Area

The purpose of the Gauley River National Recreation Area is to ensure the protection and preservation of the scenic, recreational, geological, fish and wildlife, and cultural resources of the area. Its mission is to protect its rugged natural features and scenic and cultural values while providing opportunities for water- and land-based recreational activities compatible with the laws governing the NPS.

Significance of the Gauley River National Recreation Area

The Gauley River National Recreation Area has a number of significant attributes:

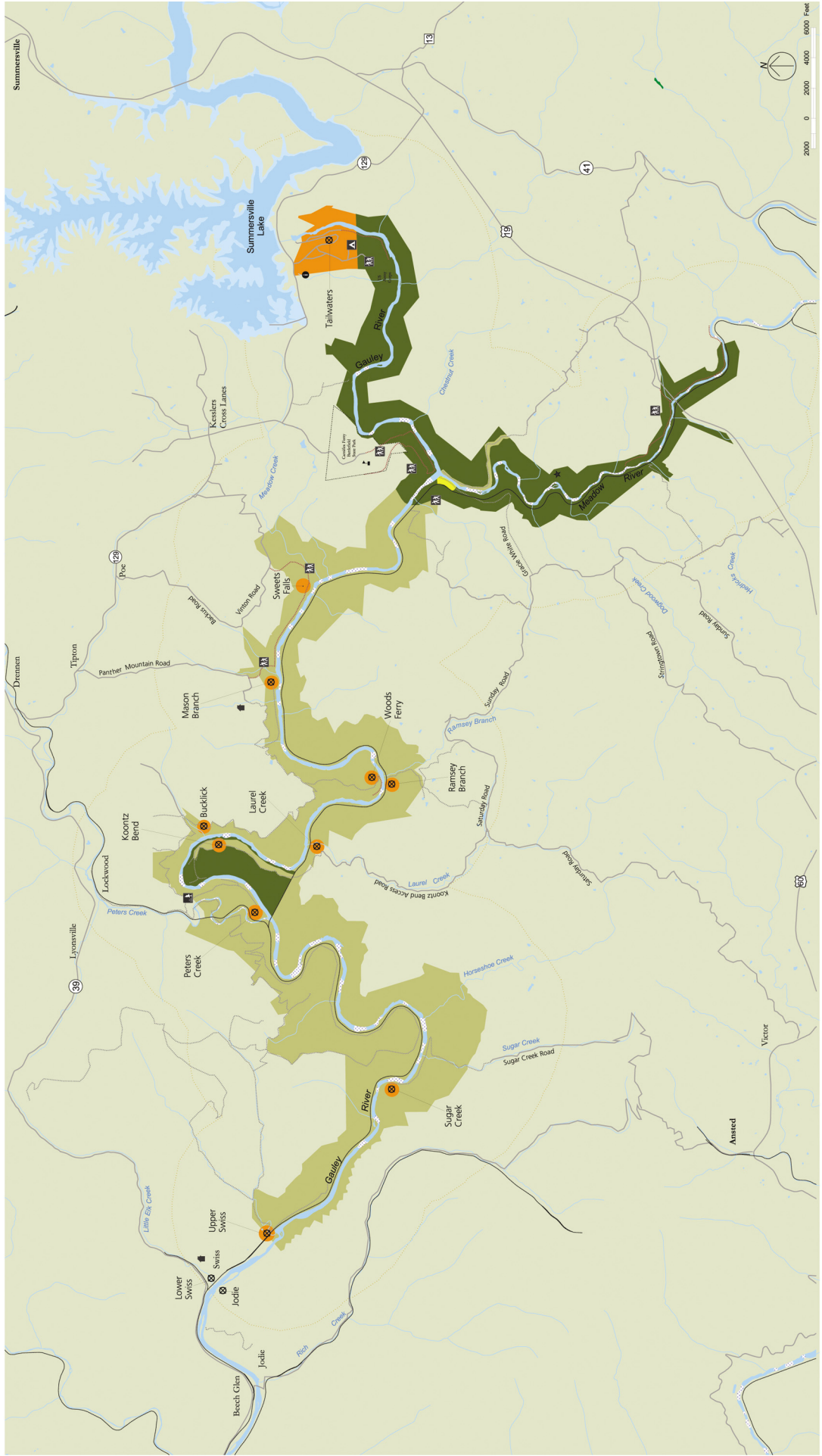
- world-class whitewater boating
- outstanding scenic, wildlife, vegetation, water, and geological resources
- a variety of land- and water-based recreational activities
- significant traditional uses such as fishing, hunting, and trapping
- locally and regionally significant cultural resources

GMP Commitments that Guide the Development Concept Plan

Management Zone	General Location of Zone	Visitor Uses/ Resource Management	Facilities
Outstanding Natural Feature	Upper Gauley River Corridor Meadow River Corridor	Focal points for recreational and interpretive activities; traditional uses (fishing, hunting, trapping); boating; hiking; rock climbing; bicycling; horseback riding; backcountry camping; picnicking; interpretation; protection from resource degradation, as needed	Scenic overlooks with related small parking and picnic facilities; trails, trailheads, and related small parking facilities; designated but undeveloped river lunch stops; wayfinding signage; interpretive signage and wayside exhibits; minor improvements to existing roads as needed to provide access to development zones and to provide access from U.S. 19 to the Meadow river
Resource Management	Middle Gauley River Corridor Lower Gauley River Corridor	Traditional uses (fishing, hunting, trapping); boating; hiking; bicycling; rock climbing; horseback riding; backcountry camping; interpretation; resources maintained to enhance scenic diversity, wildlife habitat, and natural and human-made systems as appropriate within certain landscape types	Scenic overlooks with related small parking and picnic facilities (in the Middle Gauley near Panther Mountain Road); trails, trailheads, and related small parking facilities; primitive river camping with NPS vehicle access (at one site in the Middle Gauley); at least two developed river lunch stops, with NPS vehicle access; additional designated but undeveloped river lunch stops; wayfinding signage; interpretive signage and wayside exhibits; improvements to existing roads as needed to provide access to development zones
Development	Developed Sites and Intense Visitor Use Areas (Tailwaters and all access ports along the Gauley River)	Intensive visitor use; river access; developed camping; developed group camping; picnicking; hiking; bicycling; interpretation; NRA operations and emergency services; fish stocking (in Tailwaters area)	Visitor and administration building (at Tailwaters); developed river access sites (at Tailwaters, at two or more sites in the Middle Gauley, and at one site on the Lower Gauley near Swiss); comfort/changing stations (at all developed river access sites); boater put-in car and bus parking, staging areas for commercial vehicles, and minor improvements to existing roads as needed (at all developed river access sites); developed camping (at Tailwaters); group camping (at Tailwaters and near Swiss); trails and walkways; picnic tables; wayfinding signage; interpretive signage and wayside exhibits
Historic	Areas Potentially Eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places	Interpretation; sightseeing; study programs; hiking; bicycling; protection from adverse effects, as needed	Interpretive trails; wayfinding signage; interpretive signage and wayside exhibits; improvements to existing roads, as needed
Special Use	None identified in the 1996 GMP (intended to include cemeteries, utility companies, and active railroads)	Areas where the National Park Service will not seek primary management control	Sites of active rail lines, active gas wells, and cemeteries which should fall within this zone.
Areas of Potential NRA Boundary Adjustments	Parcels within one mile of the authorized Gauley River National Recreation Area boundary	River access; NRA operations and emergency services	Boater takeouts; boater takeout car and bus parking; comfort/changing stations; trails; walkways; picnicking; wayfinding and interpretive signage; staging areas for commercial vehicles; remote parking and shuttle facilities; minor improvements to existing roads, as needed



GAULEY RIVER NATIONAL RECREATION AREA



1996 General Management Plan

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|-----------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Management Zones | Access and Circulation Features | Activities | Park Facilities | Areas of Potential NRA Boundary Adjustments |
| Outstanding Natural Feature | Paved Roads and Highways | Picnicking | Operations, Visitor Information Center | Limit of Potential Boundary Adjustments |
| Subzone Resource Management | Unimproved Dirt Roads and Four-Wheel Drive Roads | (Day-Use Activities) Rock Climbing | Operations and Storage | (including outlying parcels within one-mile of the authorized area as may be needed for parking and river access facilities) |
| Subzone Development Zone | Railroad | Relocate Camping | | |
| Historic Zone | Trails - Foot Trail Access to Natural and Cultural Resources | Cooperative (Resources Interpretation- Civil War, Coal Mining, Dam, Virgin Timber) | | |
| Special Use Zone | River Access - Whitewater Boating | | | |



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Gauley River National Recreation Area
P.O. Box 246
Glen Jean, WV 25846

Meadow River near Patterson Ferry Road



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Who is on the Planning Team?

The DCP Planning Team consists of the Park Superintendent, Park Staff, and technical specialists from the National Park Service's Northeast Regional Office. Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC is a private contractor that is assisting the National Park Service with the planning process. The Park Superintendent and the Director of the Northeast Regional Office of the National Park Service will be the decision-makers in the planning effort. The DCP Planning Team will coordinate with appropriate State of West Virginia, federal and local agencies.

Comments? Write or Email to:

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Gauley River National Recreation Area Meeting set for September 23rd!

Development Concept Plan Schedule

- *Summer 2003* – Data Collection/ Identification of Issues, Scoping, Public Meeting to Discuss Goals and Issues
- *Fall, 2003* – Development and Evaluation of Alternatives, Public Meeting to Review Alternatives
- *Spring 2004* – Identification of Preferred Alternative, Draft DCP/EA, Public Meeting to Review Draft
- *Summer 2004* – Final DCP/EA
- *Fall 2004* – Record of Decision

You are encouraged to participate in the DCP Planning Process by attending the public meetings and sharing your views and comments concerning the future of the Gauley River National Recreation Area. Your comments and ideas will help us determine the level of planning that is most appropriate for the Gauley River National Recreation Area. Please come and join us!

First Public Meeting Time and Place

The National Park Service has scheduled the first public meeting to begin the Development Concept Plan for the Gauley River National Recreation Area.

September 23rd, 2003, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
Midland Trail High School
Route 60 (1/2 east of Route 19), Hico, WV

At this meeting, the NPS Planning Team will provide an overview of what is included in a Development Concept Plan (DCP), an explanation as to why NPS prepares DCPs, and a description of the planning process that will be used to develop the new DCP. We will also address how the new Gauley River National Recreation Area DCP offers an important opportunity to move forward with implementing the management concepts established in the 1996 General Management Plan for the Gauley River National Recreation Area.